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1964/08/03

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TELCON
McNamara
Ball
8/3/64 10:40 A.M.

The President had called McNamara a few minutes ago and said he was receiving many calls and wanted guidance on what statement to make.

McNamara suggested the following: (See statement attached)

"I the President have instructed the Navy to continue their patrol in the Gulf of Tonkin along the coast of North Viet-Nam in international waters, to double the force by adding an additional destroyer..., to provide an air cap..., to issue instructions to the commanders of the air-craft and the vessels to attack any force attacking our ships or air-craft in international waters or international air-space and attack with the objective not only of driving them off but of destroying them."

Ball thought this statement ~~was~~ fine.

McNamara also told the President that Ball had suggested a meeting for this afternoon.

McNamara said the President suggested that Ball and McN. get together with the House and the Senate individuals concerned and brief them on what has happened. Ball said he had just spoken to Fulbright.

McNamara said that he would call Mansfield, McCormack and get it lined up for after lunch and then Ball, Rusk, Vance and McNm. will get Wheeler and go up and talk about it.

McNamara said he would let Ball's office know the outcome.

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"I the President have instructed the Navy to: 1. continue the patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin off the coast of North Viet-Nam; 2. to double the force by adding an additional destroyer to the one already on patrol; 3. to provide a combat air patrol over the destroyers and 4. to issue orders to the commanders of the combat air craft and the two destroyers: a. to attack any force which attacks them in international waters and be so attack with the objective not only of driving off the force but of destroying it."